



## **Rehabilitation Research and Development Service Scientific Merit Review Board; Federal Register Notice of Meeting**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. ch. 10, that a meeting of the Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (RR&D) Scientific Merit Review Board (hereinafter, “the Board”) will be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024, via Webex from 1-1:30 p.m. EST. The meeting will be partially closed to the public, with an open portion from 1-1:10. The closed portion, from 1:10-1:30 p.m., will be used for discussion, examination of and reference to the research applications and scientific review. Discussions will involve reference to staff and consultant critiques of research proposals. Discussions will also cover the scientific merit of each proposal and the qualifications of personnel conducting the studies, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. Additionally, premature disclosure of research information could significantly obstruct implementation of proposed agency action regarding the research proposals. As provided by Public Law 92-463 subsection 10(d), and amended by Public Law 94-409, closing the committee meeting is in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(6) and (9)(B).

The objective of the Board is to provide for the fair and equitable selection of the most meritorious research projects for support by VA research funds and to offer advice for research program officials on program priorities and policies. The ultimate objective of the Board is to ensure that the VA RR&D program promotes functional independence and improves the quality of life for impaired and disabled Veterans.

Board members will advise the Director of RR&D and the Chief Research and Development Officer on the scientific and technical merit, mission relevance and protection of human and animal subjects of the proposals submitted to RR&D. The Board does not consider grants, contracts or other forms of extramural research.

Members of the public may attend the open portion of the meeting via WebEx, from 1-1:10 p.m., in listen-only mode, as the time-limited open agenda does not allow for public comment presentations. To attend the open portion of the meeting, the public may dial the Webex phone number (1-833-558-0712), then enter the meeting access code (2764 419 8398).

Written comments from members of the public should be mailed to Kristy Benton-Grover, Designated Federal Officer, RR&D, Department of Veterans Affairs (14RDR), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, or to Kristy.Benton-Grover@va.gov at least five days before the meeting. The public comments will be shared with the Board members. The public may not attend the closed portion of the meeting as disclosure of research information could significantly obstruct implementation of proposed agency action regarding the research proposals. As provided by Public Law 92-463 subsection 10(d), and amended by Public Law 94-409, closing the committee meeting is in accordance with title 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(6) and (9)(B).

Dated: January 29, 2024.

**LaTonya L. Small,**

*Federal Advisory Committee Management Officer.*

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